

Trial News

Elders Victoria Sire Evaluation Group

Update from our Major Sponsor - Elders

The new selling centre

On August the 11th, 2005 Elders conducted our first sale in the new Australian Wool Handlers (AWH) selling centre. This centre is the most modern and technically advanced selling complex in Australia, with buyers, sellers and producers all under one roof.

Australian Wool Handlers has opened its Frederick Street, Brooklyn complex to present woolgrowers and buyers with the State's only combined auction selling facilities alongside the existing show floor facilities.

Everyone at Elders firmly believes this new, first-class facility has provided our wool producing clients and wool buying customers with a secure, one-stop shop for the efficient exchange of ownership of wool in the southern region. It is a facility for the whole industry and all participants are being invited to sell wool through AWH Frederick Street complex under the same commercial arrangements as Elders receive.

To remain relevant and vibrant, industries must continually restructure and develop new methods and we must seek every possible efficiency gain and opportunity to do things better than we currently are. With the global challenges we currently face, we believe our wool industry is not in a position to rest on its laurels and must seriously challenge the comfortable status quo that exists in some quarters.

Market Snapshot

European interest continues with mills calling for early deliveries. Indian inquiry has picked up with many wool users requesting offers. Japanese operators appear active and Korean tops demand has increased further. In addition to this Chinese mills are reporting that demand for processed goods (particularly worsted fabric) is better than in recent years. Whilst Europe have

implemented quantity quota restrictions from China for finished garments they do not place such limits on fabric which has resulted in good orders for weavers and the benefits are starting to flow down to spinners and top makers.

Although China now appear convinced that they are unlikely to purchase wool at pre Christmas levels they are still finding it difficult to stomach. A large majority of the Chinese mills will need to buy. Although some Australian greasy wool has already been cleared into China and is now trading domestically it will not be enough to satisfy what we believe will be a significant hunger for wool come the end of March.



David Whyte
(Committee member
from Elders) and
Clients

Trial Field Day 2006 April 5

Key Speaker David Sackett
CRC project representatives
1100 sheep on display from 32 Sires
Official launch of Merino Superior Sires 11



10am– Noon



Arundale Past Co

Signs 8km on the Harrow Rd from Balmoral

A Word From Our New Chairman Tom Silcock



Having had a long involvement with the Western District Sire Evaluation trials from the early days, when my entry ram was rejected because it was not a registered stud ram, through to being heavily involved in building up the trails that have now run over the last decade (initially using our own property "The Mountain Dam" for the initial two years) I welcome the chairmanship of our committee. I thank the out going chairman Robert Plush for his considerable contribution over the last decade in ensuring the continual running of our trials. I see one of my major challenges is keeping our trial relevant to the immediate industry. With the wider industry now wanting access to our results it is imperative we keep our relevance to identifying the most profitable sheep for western Victoria. It is my personal view the wool industry is almost being misled by using an average of 18 month immature data to select the best animals to perform in a typical average 3 year old flock. On the other hand these sorts of trials are the best of what we have on offer enabling us all to keep challenging our breeding programs in the pursuit of excellence in our own flocks, for the benefit of the wider wool industry.

Our previous chairman - Robert Plush

As the chairman from the outset of the ESVE group I'm proud to pass over the reins to Tom Silcock. We as a group have achieved a very high standard of independent data collection, allowing our fellow sheep producers to continually enter rams at Balmoral. I wish to thank all our committee for their hard work and endeavour for excellence.

We have great sponsors who like us see a need for the evaluation of merino rams. Particularly I wish to thank Elders for their support. We need great wool companies to help us wool growers find great or super sires enabling woolgrowers to proposer who will help wool companies profit.

Over my time as chairman we have taken the trial to four properties which I congratulate all the owners who have allowed us to use their top genetics as a sound ewe base to give an unbiased result. This year we head onto our fifth property at "Tuloona" owned by the Craig family, many thanks for allowing us to use your superfine genetics. Trust that you gain as much from the trial as the previous owners.

Our group would not function without a manager, therefore I wish to thank Tania and Jodie who have taken over in the last 6 months. Thanks to David Rendell & Associates for your commitment to our group.



Thank-you to our Sponsors

We gratefully acknowledge the generous support of our sponsors and appreciate their participation. Please support these businesses.



David Rendell
& Associates
Vet Consultant



Arundale Host property 2004-2005



The 2004 drop have benefited from a good Spring and are currently grazing on oats stubble and being supplemented with lupins and are stocked at 12 dse. These sheep were jetted at the end of October, drenched mid December and were crutched and 2nd summer drenched in February.

The 2005 drop lambs were mulsed, marked and vaccinated late September, were weaned and weighed in December and received their 2nd vaccination and 1st summer drench. They are away to a good start after the above average Spring and being imprint fed while on the ewes and continued with grain and hay being progressively increased to meet their needs. These weaners were crutched in February and received their 2nd summer drench.

Barry Matthews

Participating Studs in 2006

| | | | | | |
|------------------|-------------|----------|---------------|---------|---------------|
| Avington | Hazeldean | Hyfield | Bindawarra | Melrose | Pleasant Park |
| The Mountain Dam | Toland Poll | Windarra | Merinotech | Tuloona | |
| | Kerrsville | Goodwood | Pastora Black | | |

Tuloona Pastoral Company Host Property 2006 - 2007

We have a new host property this year. Michael and Jane Craig of Tuloona Pastoral Services have offered to host the 2006 Sire Evaluation. Michael leads an impressive and dedicated fine wool enterprise at Harrow. Each year Tuloona uses Laserscan® and Length & Strength testing to fine tune their traditional sheep selection processes to achieve the following aims:

- 16-18 micron stylish wool
- Tensile strength > 45NKT

- Less than 1.5 VM
- Low % mid-point breaks
- Low C of V

This year Tuloona will be joining 12,000 fine wool merino ewes in late February. The average rainfall at Harrow is 600 mm (24"), but we have fallen short of that the last few years. The ewes for this years trial are 3 YO ewes that were micron tested individually as 2YO to an average of 17.4 micron.

Artificial Insemination 2006

Fourteen rams are in this year's trial and 59 ewes for each ram were Artificially Inseminated on the 6 and 7 of March 2006 by Margie Trowbridge from Brecon Breeders, SA.



Elders VP Victoria Sire Evaluation Group Committee Contacts

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| | |
|----------------------|----------------------------------|
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**Results for each assessment from 1998
– 2004 are available on request.**

A first look at breech traits in the Elders Sire Evaluation Trial

Following the decision by the wool industry to phase out surgical mulesing by 2010, a number of research projects have been initiated to investigate alternative approaches to the control of breech strike. AWI is funding the \$2 million project, with research being undertaken by CSIRO and the Department of Agriculture WA aimed at reducing susceptibility to breech strike through selective breeding for indicator traits such as reduced breech wrinkle, bare breech, and reduced dags. This project involves setting up breeding flocks in Armidale (NSW) and Mount Barker (WA).

One of the problems facing breeders and researchers alike is that it is difficult to assess the variation which exists in breech traits because the majority of animals are mulesed. This has the effect of distorting the natural variation. To overcome this problem we have begun to survey a number of industry flocks, scoring breech traits in lambs prior to mulesing. At the moment it is unclear whether scoring the traits at such an early age will be reliable, but our research project is designed to provide information on questions like this.

One of the flocks we surveyed was the 2005 drop of the Elders sire evaluation, run at “Arundale” near Balmoral. 435 animals (rams and ewes) were scored at lamb marking 27 September 2005.

The following scoring system was adopted to minimize the disruption to the lamb marking process that was taking place in conjunction with breech trait scoring. Body wrinkle and bare area (in the “inguinal” or “crutch” area) were scored prior to the lamb being loading into a marking cradle. Breech wrinkle and tail length were observed after the lamb was loaded in a marking cradle.

| Trait | Score |
|----------------|---|
| Body wrinkle | 1 (no wrinkle) - 5 (heavy wrinkle) |
| Breech wrinkle | 1 (no wrinkle) - 5 (heavy wrinkle) |
| Bare area | 1 (very woolly) - 5 (bare) |
| Tail length | 1 (short), 2 (normal), 3 (long), 4 (abnormal) |

Below are photos taken for illustrative purposes:



(L-R) Plain breech, wrinkly, and examples of both in the yards.



Animals which are very bare (left) and very woolly (right) in the inguinal (groin) region at lamb marking

Further information on breech scoring traits can be obtained from AWI (see below for details).

Results

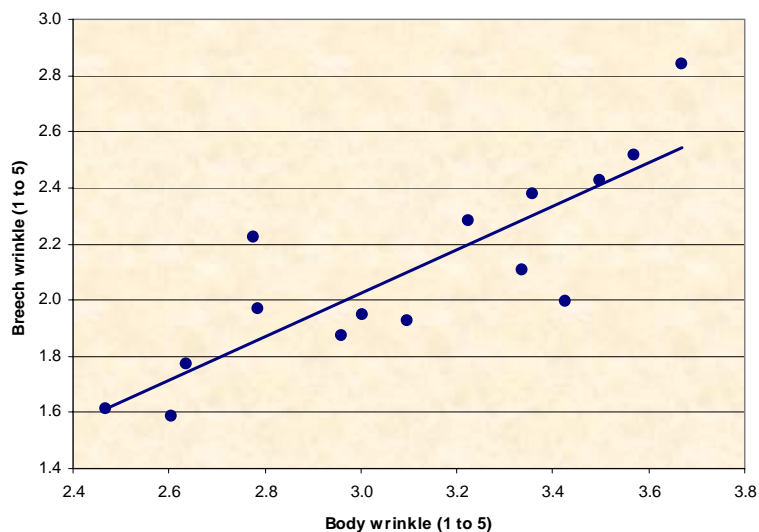
We saw significant sire variation for all traits, although the sire differences for bare area were not as large as for the other traits.

Breech wrinkle was quite closely related to body wrinkle (the correlation between sire means was 0.85). This indicates that body wrinkle may be a useful selection trait, particularly where animals have already been mulesed.

Although there were sire differences for tail length, this trait needs to be adjusted for body size, which was not available at the time of analysis.

| Sire | Body wrinkle (1 to 5) | Breech wrinkle (1 to 5) | Bare area (1 to 5) | Tail length (1 to 3) |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| Connewarran 30134 | 2.8 | 2.0 | 3.1 | 1.7 |
| Goodwood 0056 | 2.6 | 1.6 | 3.0 | 1.8 |
| Goodwood BW1143/01 | 3.1 | 1.9 | 3.1 | 1.9 |
| Gringegalgon ZAC0011 | 3.6 | 2.5 | 3.0 | 1.8 |
| Hannaton 202 | 3.0 | 1.9 | 3.0 | 1.7 |
| Hazeldean Zachary 0.12 | 3.4 | 2.0 | 2.9 | 1.9 |
| Kilfeera Park 3.21 | 3.3 | 2.1 | 2.9 | 2.0 |
| Kilfeera Park 6.275 | 3.0 | 1.9 | 3.1 | 1.7 |
| Kurra-Wirra BLK38 | 3.7 | 2.8 | 3.1 | 1.9 |
| Nerstane N78 | 2.6 | 1.8 | 3.1 | 1.9 |
| OneOak OONo23001 | 3.2 | 2.3 | 2.9 | 2.2 |
| RubyHills 0188 | 2.8 | 2.2 | 3.3 | 1.8 |
| TheGrange 201112 | 3.4 | 2.4 | 3.0 | 2.0 |
| The Mountain Dam SN77 | 3.5 | 2.4 | 2.8 | 1.9 |
| Windarra 010838 | 2.5 | 1.6 | 3.0 | 1.9 |
| Average | 3.1 | 2.1 | 3.0 | 1.9 |

Figure 1: Predicted sire means for breech wrinkle v. body wrinkle



Further information

AWI: Jules Dorrian, julesdorrian@wool.com.au

CSIRO: Andrew Swan, andrew.swan@csiro.au

Department of Agriculture WA: Johan Greeff:

jgreeff@agric.gov.wa.au

Written by

Heather Brewer and Andrew Swan

January 2006

The EVSE committee would like to
Thank Tom Hanson for his generous
support of this trial

Animal Health Management

Monitoring Ewes from Joining to Lambing

by Veterinary Consultant David Rendell of D. Rendell & Associates, Hamilton, VIC.

1. Body Condition

Method

Visually adequate if bare shorn but if ewes have greater than 2-3 months wool have to manually individually check.

Check 50 per mob.

Indications

- To assess supplementary feed requirements and or paddock stocking strategy:
Aim for Condition Score (CS) 2.9+ with ewes, Check a minimum of 2-3 key mobs monthly when < 1200 kg/DM/Ha green pasture is available.
- Targeted feeding of lighter ewes
CS whole mob & draft off those CS < 2.8
6 weeks prior to joining
6 weeks prior to lambing [if feed availability is < 1200 kg DM/Ha]

2. Weight monitoring

Method

Weigh a minimum of 50 and a maximum of 100 per mob for accurate mob average

Indications

- Critical for maiden ewes pre-joining to ensure they reach target size at joining
Weigh 8 weeks prior to joining so still have time to change the weight
Only join if their weight at joining (as % of mature weight) is:
 - None if <73% [ie 37kg*]
 - Only those 73-80% [37 - 40kg] that are > CS 2.8
 - All if >80% [40 kg] unless very skinny < CS 2.3

* Weight in brackets is the target where I have assumed mature weight is 50 kg

- Auditing flock management standards.
Far greater accuracy and objectivity when comparing average weight rather than average CS. With mature mobs a minimum schedule is to weigh 50 per mob in 2- 3 key mobs twice per year at the same time each year e.g. at joining and just prior to lambing.

3. Pregnancy scanning

- Monitoring fertility & assisting diagnosis of cause of infertility
Minimum 100 per mob 2-3 key mobs including maidens
The minimum time for wet/dry pregnancy scanning is 40 days from ram removal
The optimum time for multiple pregnancy scanning is 75-90 days from ram introduction.
- Efficient allocation of feed resources
Markedly different nutritional requirements of non-preg ewes, single preg ewes and twin preg ewes.
The justification scanning whole mob is higher with:
 - Mobs joined well below target weight or condition
 - Single ram joining,
 - Maiden ewe mobs,
 - If expecting a higher % of twin pregnancies,
 - Poor autumn breaks.

4. FEC Monitoring

| | Jan – April | Post autumn break | Pre lambing |
|------------|-------------|-------------------|--------------|
| Maidens | 2- 3 times | 7 weeks | Yes |
| Mature Age | 1-2 times | 8 weeks | ? see matrix |

20 faecal samples per mob minimum

The above are very broad guidelines (see Rendell's Worm risk Matrix for further details)
For eg. Mature age mob > condition score 3, the impact of worms is low and drench needs are low.

For your copy of the Worm Risk Matrix or further information contact:

David Rendell & Associates Ph (03) 55721419

Hands out of pockets..... the big step!



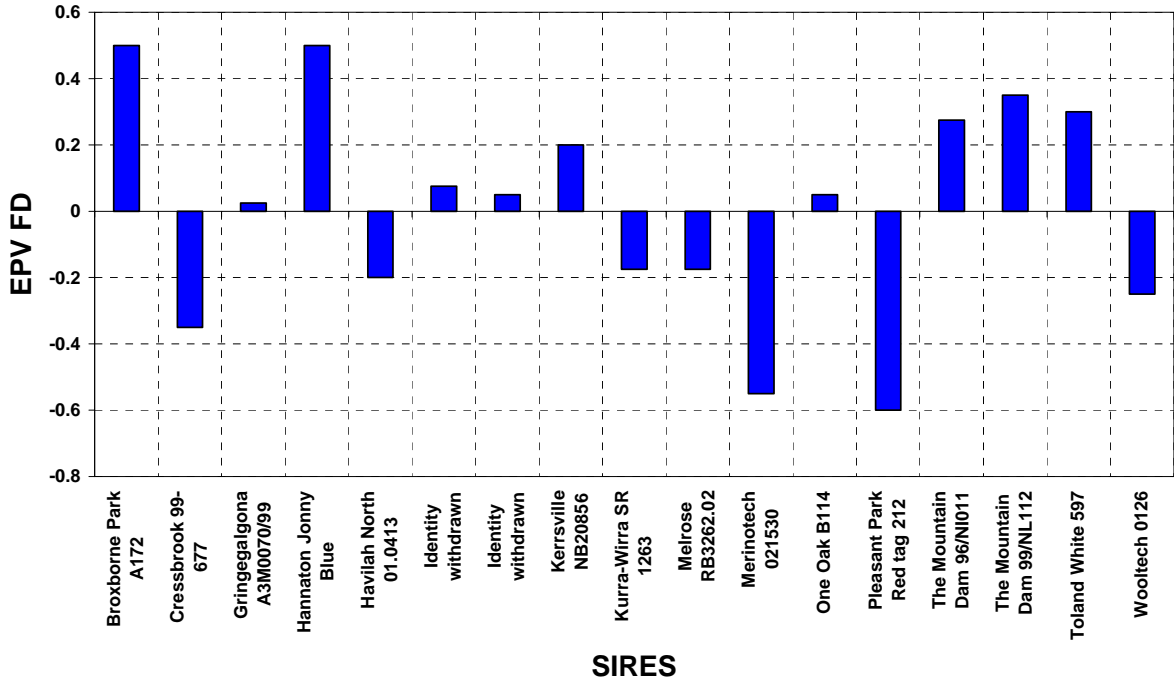
Condition scoring
(short ribs and spine)

Fat scoring
(12th long rib)

EVSE 2004 drop – 1st Evaluation

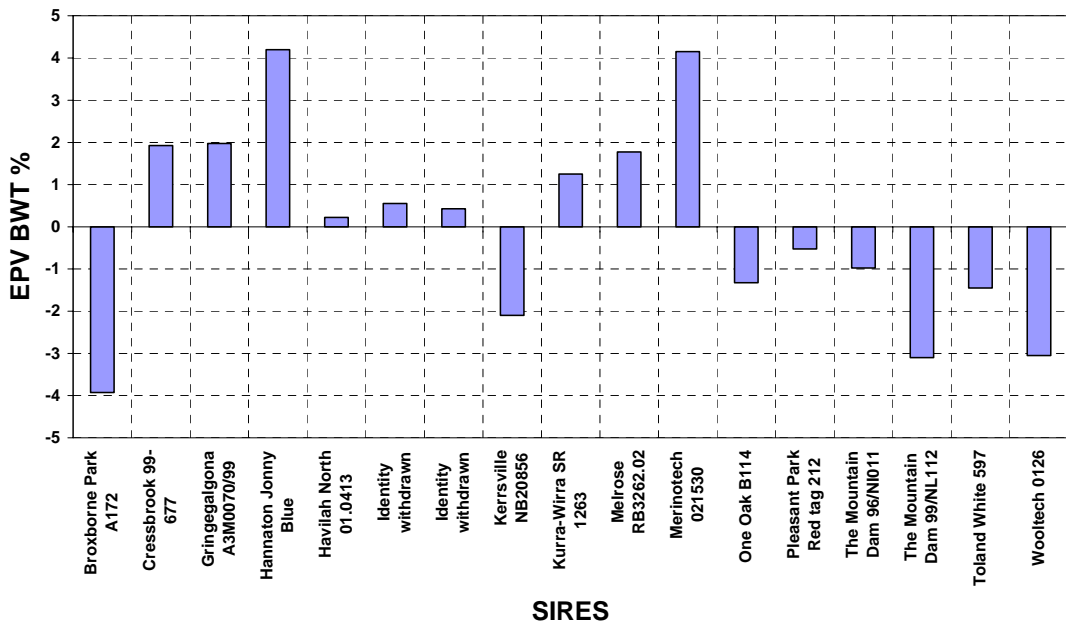
The Softies

Estimated Progeny Values for Fibre Diameter
(more negative means the progeny will be finer)



The Biggies

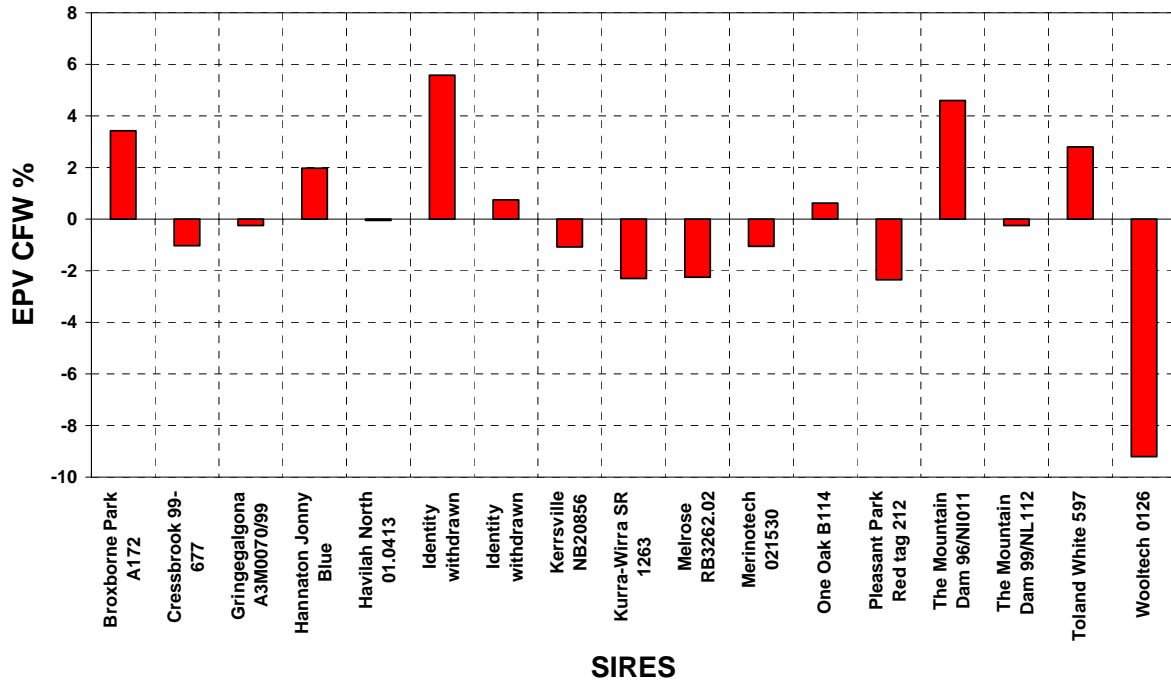
Estimated Progeny Values for Bodyweight Percentage
(positive means progeny will be bigger at yearling age)



EVSE 2004 drop – 1st Evaluation

The Bale Fillers

Estimated Progeny Values for Clean Fleece Weight Percentage
(more positive means progeny will cut more wool)



The Pretties & Uglies

Percentage of Progeny Classified as Tops & Culls
SIRE

